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New U.S. Patent Application filed **September 14, 2001** for application entitled:

**MULTIPACK FOR REMOVING FILLED BAGS IN A PREDETERMINED
SEQUENCE**

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Multipack for removing filled bags in a predetermined sequence.

5 The invention relates to a pack of products which are packed for protection in a bag, the pack consisting of at least two bags. The contents (products) present in these bags can be identical or different. These contents are preferably to be removed and used in a predetermined sequence. These bags are of the type which have an inner area and an edge enclosing this inner area, for example rectangular sealed bags known to the person skilled in the art. Of course, these bags can also be sealed on only two or
10 three edges or on one edge.

15 The products concerned are preferably planar systems, for example stickers, labels, tissue wipes, diskettes, CD-ROMs, chip cards, coins, postage stamps, planar systems for oral or transdermal application or plasters and the like. In a particular embodiment, the products concerned are identical and/or different hormone plasters (transdermal therapy systems with sex hormones). These plasters can be used, for example, in the context of hormone replacement therapy, where, in a first phase (duration about 14 days), a plaster containing an estrogen is applied every
20 third day and, in a second phase (duration about 14 days), a plaster containing an estrogen and a gestagen is applied every third day. In such therapy, therefore, about 4 plasters have to be used in the first phase, and then about 4 plasters in the second phase.

25 Thus, the object of the invention is to simplify the administration of these plasters in the intended therapy schedule, and to avoid confusion occurring, by providing a multipack which contains a defined number of planar systems, for example a total of 8 plasters in the respective bags, in the required sequence and joined together in a block.

30 The object is achieved by a multipack for removing individual bags, wherein the bags have an inner area and an edge enclosing this inner area, wherein at least two bags are joined together to form a block, wherein within this block a section of the edge of a first bag lies almost
35 over the whole surface of the section of the edge of an adjacent second bag, and, wherein within this block, the thereby superposed sections of the

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edges of the respectively adjacent bags are firmly connected to one another.

5 This block can additionally be provided with a backing. To protect the bag from contamination and mechanical damage, the backing can be replaced by a re-sealable cover which encases the bags. The cover can additionally be closed with a closure seal so that the person buying the pack can tell whether the pack is still intact. Such a seal is, for example, a sticker which is stuck on two articulated flaps. The materials from which the backing or
10 the cover are made can be paper, paperboard, cardboard, plastic, metal, plastic foil, composite materials such as metal-coated and/or plastic-coated paper, etc.

15 However, the block itself can also be provided with a closure seal. In this case, such a seal (sticker) is arranged to the side of or opposite the connecting means which firmly connect the superposed sections of the edges of the respectively adjacent bags.

20 This multipack (so-called calendar pack, ie. the block of several firmly connected bags) can then be packed in a conventional folding carton. In the case of large packs, a plurality of these multipacks can be combined in one folding carton.

25 If the contents present in the inner area of the bags have a certain thickness, and if the block contains a plurality of bags, these bags can fan out, but this can be avoided by using spacers.

For this purpose, a spacer (see Figure 6) is inserted in this block between the section of the edge of a first bag and the almost fully overlying section of the edge of an adjacent second bag and then, in this block, the thereby
30 superposed sections of the edges of the respectively adjacent bags and the intermediate spacers (eg. foil made of plastic, paper strips) are firmly connected to one another. The spacers preferably have a thickness which corresponds to the thickness of the contents of a bag. Adapting the thickness of the adhesive layer or adhesive foil is not necessary.

35 The user (eg. the patient) first removes the multipack from the folding carton. By means of the original seal (ie. the undamaged closure seal), it is possible to tell whether the multipack has already been opened. After

opening the seal, the user first removes the uppermost bag since this is the one presented to the user and the easiest to remove. The backing or the cover ensures that the user cannot remove a bag from the back and thus in the incorrect order, i.e. reverse order. On removing the first bag, the joins between the remaining bags are not destroyed and the required sequence is thus retained. The remaining bags are then protected by closing the cover.

The intended sequence of removal of the bags and the sequence of application of the contents (plasters, TTS) are further indicated by providing printed information (eg. numbers, date) on the individual bags.

In a particular embodiment, the section of the edge of a first bag is laid over the section of the edge of an adjacent second bag in such a way that the respective margins of these edges are slightly offset in parallel (see Figure 7). The advantage of this is that when an adhesive is used as connecting means, the contact surface between adhesive and bag foil is increased and a better hold on the bags is afforded. This also makes it easier to use an adhesive tape as connecting means. The extent of the parallel offset generally depends on the thickness of the bags and in a preferred embodiment this amounts to at least 0.3 mm.

Such multipacks are produced in the following steps:

- a) manufacturing the product-filled bags in conventional manner,
- b) superposing these bags in such a way that the section of the edge of a first bag lies almost over the whole surface of the section of the edge of an adjacent second bag, the subsequent sequence of removal and application being observed, and
- c) permanently connecting the superposed sections of the edges of the bags.

If appropriate, perforation lines or other predetermined break lines are even punched into the edge of the bag during the manufacture of the product-filled bags.

If appropriate, a backing or cover is also laid under the superposed bags before or after the permanent connection of the superposed sections of the edges.

In a particular embodiment of this production method, after the bags to be permanently connected have been placed over one another, these bags are offset in parallel slightly (preferably by at least about 0.3 mm in each case) so that upon subsequent connection of the superposed sections of the edges of the bags with the aid of adhesives, for example, the contact surface between adhesive and bag is increased.

In another embodiment, the bags of a multipack can hold two different types of contents (eg. two TTS with different active substances or active substance combinations) which have to be removed in a predetermined sequence corresponding to the sequence of the bags within the multipack (from the top toward the backing).

According to the invention, the multipack can be used in a method for transdermal administration of hormones in which, in a first treatment phase, at least one transdermal therapy system (TTS) is administered which contains at least one estrogen, and, in a second treatment phase, at least one transdermal therapy system is administered which contains at least one estrogen and one gestagen. For this purpose, at the start of the first treatment phase, at least one bag containing a transdermal therapy system with at least one estrogen is removed from the multipack and applied to a user's skin and, at the start of the second treatment phase, at least one bag containing a transdermal therapy system with at least one estrogen and one gestagen is removed from said multipack and applied to user's skin.

The actual number of bags in the multipack in this case depends on what period of administration the individual transdermal therapy systems are designed for. If the transdermal therapy systems are plasters, for example, which are intended to be worn by the user for three days, a total number of two times four TTS or two times five TTS is recommended, the number two here relating to the different TTS types (estrogen-containing or estrogen- and gestagen-containing).

Embodiments of the multipack according to the invention are explained with reference to Figures 1 through 7:

Figure 1 shows a basic form of the multipack according to the invention. It comprises a simple backing (1) and the individual bags (2) which are connected to one another at their ends to form a block with the aid of a connecting means (3). Such a connecting means can be, for example, a
5 chemically or physically setting binder, that is to say adhesive, glue, one-sided or double-sided adhesive tape or the combination of such means. Hot-melt adhesives known to the person skilled in the art are preferably used.

10 Figure 2 shows a further embodiment of the multipack. Here, the backing is in the form of a cover (4). The cover (4) encloses the individual bags (5). These bags, together with the cover, are connected to one another with the aid of the connecting means (6) to form a block.

15 In Figure 3, the multipack is illustrated with a cover (4) in the opened state. The uppermost bag (7) can be removed from the front, without in so doing destroying the block of other bags (5).

20 Figures 4 and 5 illustrate a further embodiment of the multipack. Here, the bags (11, 12) have an additional edge (9) separated by a perforation line (10). The bags (11, 12) are connected to the backing (8) in the area of this edge (9) to form a block. This can be done in a known manner, inter alia by adhesive bonding, gluing, sealing or stapling. To remove the respective upper bag (12), the latter is separated at the perforation line (10). The
25 perforation edge (9) of the removed bag remains firmly connected to the respective edges of the other bags (11 in Figure 5) of the block.

Figure 6 shows an embodiment in which spacers (13) lie between the almost fully superposed sections of the edges (9) of adjacent bags (5).
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Figure 7 shows an embodiment in which the respective margins of the edges (9) of the individual adjacent bags (5) are offset in parallel in the direction of the opposite edges.

Patent Claims

1. A multipack for removing individual bags, wherein
- 5 a) the bags have an inner area and an edge enclosing this inner area,
- b) at least two bags are joined together to form a block,
- c) within this block, a section of the edge of a first bag lies almost over the whole surface of the section of the edge of an adjacent second bag, and
- 10 d) within this block, the thereby superposed sections of the edges of the respectively adjacent bags are firmly connected to one another.
2. The multipack as claimed in claim 1, wherein the block comprising at least two bags additionally includes a backing or a re-sealable cover.
- 15 3. The multipack as claimed in claim 1 or 2, wherein the block comprising at least two bags additionally includes a closure seal.
4. The multipack as claimed in one of claims 1 through 3, wherein the superposed sections of the edges of respectively adjacent bags are connected with the aid of a hot-melt adhesive.
- 20 5. The multipack as claimed in one of claims 1 through 3, wherein the superposed sections of the edges of respectively adjacent bags are connected with the aid of an adhesive tape.
6. The multipack as claimed in one of claims 1 through 3, wherein the superposed sections of the edges of respectively adjacent bags are connected by means of glue.
- 25 7. The multipack as claimed in one of claims 1 through 3, wherein the superposed sections of the edges of respectively adjacent bags are connected with the aid of staples.
8. The multipack as claimed in one of claims 1 through 3, wherein the superposed sections of the edges of respectively adjacent bags are connected with the aid of a sealing medium.
- 30 9. The multipack as claimed in one of claims 1 through 3, wherein the superposed sections of the edges of respectively adjacent bags are connected with the aid of a double-sided adhesive tape.
- 35 10. The multipack as claimed in one of claims 1 through 9, wherein the bags have a perforation line on an edge enclosing the inner area,

and the superposed sections of the edges of respectively adjacent bags are limited by this perforation line.

- 5 11. The multipack as claimed in one of claims 1 through 10, wherein the respective margins of the superposed sections of the edges of adjacent bags are offset in parallel and/or the superposed sections of the edges have spacers lying between them.
12. The multipack as claimed in one of claims 1 through 11, wherein the bags have identical or different contents which are to be removed in a predetermined sequence.
- 10 13. A method for producing a multipack, comprising the following steps:
- a) manufacturing product-filled bags in conventional manner,
 - b) superposing the product-filled bags in such a way that the section of the edge of a first bag lies almost over the whole surface of the section of the edge of an adjacent second bag, the subsequent sequence of removal being observed, and
 - 15 c) permanently connecting the superposed sections of the edges of the bags.
- 20 14. The method for producing a multipack as claimed in claim 13, wherein a perforation line is additionally incorporated in those sections of the edges of the product-filled bags which are to be superposed.
- 25 15. The method for producing a multipack as claimed in claim 13 or 14, wherein, in an additional step, the margins of those sections of the edges of the product-filled bags which are to be superposed are offset in parallel.
- 30 16. The method for producing a multipack as claimed in one of claims 13 through 15, wherein spacers are additionally inserted between those sections of the edges of the product-filled bags which are to be superposed.
- 35 17. Use of a multipack for removing individual bags intended to hold stickers, labels, diskettes, CD-ROMs, chip cards, coins, postage stamps, planar systems for oral or transdermal application, or plasters.
18. A method for transdermal administration of hormones, in which, in a first treatment phase, at least one transdermal therapy system is administered which contains at least one estrogen, and, in a second treatment phase, at least one transdermal therapy system is

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administered which contains at least one estrogen and one gestagen, wherein, at the start of the first treatment phase, at least one bag containing a transdermal therapy system with at least one estrogen is removed from a multipack and applied to a user's skin, and, wherein at the start of the second treatment phase, at least one bag containing a transdermal therapy system with at least one estrogen and one gestagen is removed from said multipack and applied to a user's skin.

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